

Exhibit H

NUSS & ASSOCIATES

Investigation and Mitigation
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Cheryl Nuss

TO: Alan Dressler

FROM: Cheryl Nuss

SUBJECT: **Allen Navratil**

RE: USA v. Robert Blancas

DATE: December 13, 2021

Allen Navratil
Hi-Rise Bread Company
208 Concord Ave.
Cambridge, MA 02138

On the above date I interviewed Allen Navratil by telephone. He is the manager at Hi-Rise Bread Company and had responded to my request for employment records. Mr. Navratil provided the following:

Allen Navratil is the manager at Hi-Rise Bakery in Cambridge, Massachusetts, where Robert Blancas was employed from July 30, 2010 to August 19, 2011. Navratil explained that they are a small, family owned and run bakery, with only seven or eight fulltime bread bakers. The bakery mainly focuses on bread and pastries, but also offers sandwiches and soup.

Navratil said that they have no records regarding Robert except for his start and end date, but he does remember working with Robert. Robert was an affable and easy to get along with employee. Robert started at the bakery doing what they refer to as "table work," measuring ingredients and shaping the bread dough, and then worked himself up to being the dough mixer, which requires a certain amount of responsibility. There is usually only one person in charge of the dough mixing. Navratil does not recall exactly what time the shift started at that time, but believes it was around 3 a.m. Robert was a reliable, good employee. Navratil said that he doesn't recall any complaints or citation write-ups against him.

Navratil said that the general routine at the bakery can get pretty repetitive. It was not surprising that Robert moved on to a new opportunity to work for an exciting new restaurant called Catalyst, opened by a chef that Hi-Rise had baked bread for at the Four Seasons Hotel. Robert was very excited about the opportunity, interested in working at a restaurant where he could put other skills to work. Navratil said that he spoke to Robert a couple of times after Robert moved to

Catalyst, and he seemed to enjoy working there. He recalls that Robert was also talking about student loans, but Navratil doesn't have a recollection of Robert talking about enrolling in Le Cordon Bleu College of Culinary Arts.

End of report

Exhibit I

Le Cordon Bleu College of Culinary Arts

Cambridge, Massachusetts



Le Cordon Bleu
in North America



Parchment No.
1005

In accordance with the requirements of

La Fondation Le Cordon Bleu

Robert Blancas

Has completed the requirements for the

Diplôme in Le Cordon Bleu Culinary Arts

together with all rights, privileges, and honors thereto appertaining,
in recognition of the fulfillment of the requirements for this program.

Given in Cambridge, Massachusetts

September 28, 2012

André J. Cointreau, President and CEO Le Cordon Bleu International

Rafael Castaneda, President, Le Cordon Bleu College of Culinary Arts

Exhibit J

NUSS & ASSOCIATES

Investigation and Mitigation

Cheryl Nuss

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TO: Alan Dressler

FROM: Cheryl Nuss

SUBJECT: **William Kovel**

RE: USA v. Robert Blancas

DATE: January 13, 2022

William Kovel
Catalyst Restaurant
300 Technology Square
Cambridge, MA 02139

On the above date, I interviewed William Kovel by telephone. He is the owner of Catalyst Restaurant in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and had responded to my request for employment records. Mr. Kovel provided the following:

William Kovel is the owner of Catalyst Restaurant. He interviewed and hired Robert Blancas as part of his opening staff when Kovel began the restaurant in August of 2011. At the time he hired Robert, Robert was a student at Le Cordon Bleu College of Culinary Arts, just finishing up the program. Kovel explained that when opening a restaurant, you hire a lot of people, as turnover is high that first year. He estimates that he probably hired 60 people, and ended up with 30. Robert was a great employee, a very hard worker, and got along great with everyone, so easily made that cut.

Robert was hired as a line cook and worked in what they call the *gardemanager*, which is basically the cold station, where cold appetizers and desserts are prepared. Robert was part of the team that opened the restaurant every night, working from 3 p.m. to 11 p.m. He was more than punctual, always showing up early, and was a reliable and responsible employee. Kovel explained that it was a high volume, stressful work environment, especially being part of the opening team. The restaurant earned three out of four stars from the Boston Globe that first year, and Robert was part of that.

In addition to being a great employee, Robert was well liked. He had a great personality, kind of quirky, with his funny haircut that they teased him about, which Kovel described as a ponytail with a mullet. Robert was young at the time, probably in his early 20's. Kovel liked having him around.

Kovel explained that he no longer has any paperwork regarding Robert, but believes that Robert worked at the restaurant for a little over a year. They were sad to see him go, but Robert was moving to Tennessee, as Kovel recalls. Kovel believes that Robert had been promoted to the pasta station by the time he left. Kovel said that he wished he could have had Robert longer. He would hire him again if the opportunity arose, as Robert was a great employee. Kovel has nothing negative to say about him.

Kovel said that a few years ago, Robert stopped in for a visit; he believes it was for lunch. Kovel believes that Robert was still living in Tennessee at the time, working at a restaurant there. Robert seemed like the same guy he had been while working for Kovel.

Kovel hopes that Robert is okay, and wishes him the best.

End of report.

Exhibit K

Kiriakos Kalpakidis
1101 Vienna Ct
Grafton, WI 53024

May 11, 2022

Re: Robert Jesus Blancas

To: The Honorable Vince Chhabria

Your Honor, I've known Rob for a little over ten years. He and I studied and graduated from culinary school together at Le Cordon Bleu in Boston in 2011. Rob was always one to challenge the status quo and set an example. When he and I met, I was struggling in classes but had perfect attendance. He was quite the opposite, having the skills to easily pass the class but struggled showing up because he was too busy working 70–80-hour work weeks. One thing that allowed our friendship to grow were our personalities. He was always outgoing and one to help someone in need. He was there when I found out my brother was addicted to opioids and helped me get through it because he never judged me. That trust led to a long-time friendship even though we had parted ways after culinary school. He moved to the west coast and I moved to Milwaukee. Regardless, we always kept in touch and he even stood up in my wedding.

Rob was always the type of person who advocated for his rights but knew where to draw the line. In Boston, he never had any run-ins with law enforcement. He was always working, which never gave him time to focus on anything else, but he loved it. He also knew if he ever did get in trouble, he wouldn't be able to do what he loved, to cook. These past couple years, with the struggles of the pandemic and restrictions placed on restaurants, Rob focused elsewhere. He made some very poor choices, which have led to his present situation. I do not agree with the choices Rob has made, but I know him to be a hardworking, dedicated individual, who has always tried to contribute to society through his culinary talents. I believe he can be that person again, if given the chance to prove himself. I humbly ask you to take my letter into consideration during sentencing. Despite Rob's actions, I believe him to be a good person and friend.

Sincerely,



Kiriakos Kalpakidis

Exhibit L

I am ashamed of what I've done, I acted completely outside of my character and as a result I hurt people in ways I cannot take back. I give my most heartfelt apologies to the victim and the victim's family for the hurt I have caused. Nothing I can do can make up for it. I ruined lives and for that I fully accept what the court decides is fair.

I have spent much of my time in here working on myself and I plan to do so not only during my incarceration, but also when I'm released and through my daily life.

I cannot change my past no matter how much I wish I could, I can only ensure my future and become a positive member of society by doing so. I am blessed to have my family's continued support and feel it will be invaluable to my recovery and future plans.

Robert Blanca